

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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ABC TARGETS ADULTS WHO FURNISH ALCOHOL TO MINORS

Investigators from the Santa Barbara District Office of the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) arrested two (2) suspects on March 28, 2003, in the City of Santa Paula for furnishing alcoholic beverages to minors.

The investigators conducted a program called a Decoy Shoulder Tap Operation which targets adults who purchase alcohol for people under 21 years of age. Under the program, a minor under the direct supervision of a peace officer will stand outside a liquor or convenience store and ask patrons to buy them alcohol. The minor indicates in some way he or she is underage and cannot purchase the alcohol.

If the adults comply, investigators then arrest and cite them for furnishing alcohol to the minor. The State Legislature recently increased the penalty for furnishing alcohol to a minor from a \$250 dollar fine to a minimum \$1,000 fine, and 24 hours of community service.

The program is intended to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors who have a higher rate of drunk driving crashes than adults in general. The combination of alcohol and youth also tends to increase criminal conduct among the young. According to the American Medical Association, underage drinking can increase chances of risky sexual behavior and teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, compromise health, and result in unintentional injury and death.

For more information on the operation, contact the district administrator or district supervisor at (805) 564-7717.

ABC is a department of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which is under the direction of Secretary Maria Contreras-Sweet, a member of the Governor's Cabinet.